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THE EFFECTS OF MEGAN'S LAW ON THE REINTEGRATION OF  
CHILD SEX OFFENDERS

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A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Criminal Justice

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by  
Trisha Marie Tenorio  
March 2008

THE EFFECTS OF MEGAN'S LAW ON THE REINTEGRATION OF  
CHILD SEX OFFENDERS

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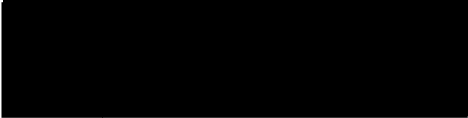
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by  
Trisha Marie Tenorio


March 2008

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## ABSTRACT

This study looked at the effects Megan's Law has on the reintegration of child sex offenders. Previous research notes the harsh consequences sex offenders endure as a result of their registration. Evidence also exists of the negative effects that family, friends, and even victims of sex offenders endure as a result of public access. Using a pre-existing dataset, this proposal attempts to understand the social and psychological consequences of community notification for offenders trying to assimilate back into society.

A sample of 704 neighborhood residents, 312 police and sheriff's agencies, and 128 probation and parole agents participated in the original study. A total of three surveys were used with each sample group completing a different survey. Several variables including the type of harassment, harassment of family members, and the impact of registration on the sex offender were assessed. The current study focuses only on the results dealing with the effects of community notification on registered sex offenders.

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To my Mom, words cannot express how thankful I am for all the love and support you've given me throughout the years. Thank you for always believing in me and inspiring me at a young age to strive for more. Most of all, I want

to thank you for being that one constant in my life. Your presence has made all the difference. I said it for the last one and I will say it again: this degree is just as much yours as it is mine. Thank you.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The issue of child sexual abuse has been a topic of concern for years. According to the Department of Justice (1997), there are currently 234,000 sexual offenders circulating through the various correctional agencies. With this number continuing to climb, it was only a matter of time before federal and state agencies implemented registration and notification laws. As a result of such legislation, one question that comes to mind is how do these laws effect sex offender reintegration? One explanation that attempts to answer this question is the use of informal sanctions such as shaming.

According to Braithwaite (1989), an offender can experience either reintegrative or disintegrative shaming upon their reentry into society. Ideally offenders would undergo reintegrative shaming after incarceration, which begins with community sanctioned shaming and ultimately ends with he or she being forgiven. Despite its idealism, rarely are sex offenders greeted with such opportunities. Instead, the majority undergo disintegrative shaming which involves stigmatizing the offender as "deviant" or "evil"

without any type of forgiveness in the end (Braithwaite, 1989). Overall, it is believed that society engages in disintegrative shaming, which results in an array of emotional, psychological, and physical problems for the sex offender.

Ever since the high profile abductions of Jacob Wetterling and Megan Kanka, attempts to limit sex offender mobility have drastically increased. One such attempt, named after the latter victim, is known as Megan's Law. Enacted in October 1996, Megan's Law requires that all states develop a notification system that allows the public access to all registered sex offenders in the area (Freeman-Longo, 2001). With this type of open access however, come possible difficulties of reintegration for the sex offender and his or her family.

While an array of literature exists on registration laws, very little address the social and psychological effects these statutes have on sex offenders themselves. Often, released sex offenders suffer some type of exclusion of residence and/or loss of employment upon their release (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000b). Studies also show that sex offenders endure feelings of stress, isolation, fear,

shame, and embarrassment as a result of their registration (Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Twerksbury, 2005).

In addition to registrants, Megan's Law may also result in negative effects for a sex offender's family, friends, and victim(s). According to Edwards and Hensley (2001), family and friends of registered sex offenders often endure ostracism for their mere association with the offender. Also, in many cases public knowledge of a sex offender's criminal history provides unwanted identification of his or her victim(s).

Based on the limited research in this topic area, the current study seeks to examine the extent Megan's Law affects sex offender reintegration. To do this, three research questions were developed: (1) What is the relationship between the notification requirement in Megan's Law and a sex offender's ability to find suitable housing, post-incarceration? (2) What are the perceptions and attitudes of society regarding the treatment of sex offenders? and (3) What are the perceptions and attitudes of society regarding the containment (control) of sex offenders?

To test the above stated research questions, this study uses secondary analysis from an original research

study entitled, "Impact Assessment of Sex Offender Notification on Wisconsin Communities, 1998." In the original research study, Zevitz and Farkas (1998) gathered information from citizens, law enforcement, and probation and parole agents to assess their experiences of the sex offender notification system in Wisconsin.

The data instruments used in the research study were three surveys, each containing open and closed-ended questions. Conducted from January 1998 through mid-September 1998, the data collection was broken down into three parts, each part involving one survey. The first survey was given to a sample of 704 neighborhood residents from 22 community notification meetings (Part 1). In Part 2 of the study, a statewide survey was given to 312 police and sheriff agencies. Lastly, a third survey was given to 128 probation and parole agents and their superiors (Part 3).

This study focuses on a variety of quantitative variables within the questionnaire given to probation and parole agents in the original study (Part 3). No variables from the survey of community members (Part 1) were used since the purpose of the current study is to focus solely on the results dealing with the effects of sex offender

registration. Additionally, variables from the survey administered to law enforcement (Part 2) were omitted due to the unavailability of the original study's data.

The results of the current study found a significant correlation between increased media attention as a result of Megan's Law and a sex offender's ability to find suitable housing. Conversely, the study produced non-significant findings for the relationship between media interest and either treatment measures or containment measures for a sex offender.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

There are few crimes in America that can create social frenzy and demand a unified response than that of child sexual abuse (Department of Justice, 1999). It is a crime that leaves parents in fear, the media up in arms, and one that even hardened criminals disapprove of. It is a crime where one out of every seven victims reported to law enforcement are under age six (Department of Justice, 2000). For years, parents have lobbied for harsher punishments and penalties for sex offenders in and outside of prison (Department of Justice, 1998). Recently, new legislature and media attention have made it virtually impossible for released child molesters to reintegrate back into society.

With the advent of the Wetterling Act and Megan's Law, both law enforcement and the community now have the ability to locate the whereabouts of any registered sex offender. These controversial acts are an attempt to inform citizens of a potential risk to their safety. Included within their registration are the location, demographics, photos, and

crime descriptions of the convicted sex offender. These registration laws seem to have garnered the most support based on society's fear of recidivism. However, studies show that the recidivism rates are not as high as most people think (Marques, Wiederanders, Day, Nelson, & van Ommeren, 2005; U.S. Department of Justice, 2003). For example, in 1994, 4,295 convicted child molesters were released from prison in 15 states. Of those that have come to the attention of the criminal justice system, 141 (3.3%) were rearrested for molesting another child within 3 years following their release. The cause for concern is still great considering, of these new child victims, nearly 80% were 13 years of age or younger (Department of Justice, 2003). Regardless of re-offense rates, this is a crime that produces life consequences not only for the victim, but for the community and the sex offender as well.

#### Prevalence of Sex Offenders

Though the act of child molestation is well publicized, not much attention has focused on the prevalence of sex offenders and their victims. The Department of Justice (1997) reports that on any given day there are approximately 234,000 sexual offenders within the



care, custody or control of correctional agencies. Of these, roughly 88,000 are housed in prisons and they make up around 9.7% of the State prison population nationwide. While sexual assault encompasses a wide range of victims, the focus on children as victims seems to be on the rise. Drawing on more than two-dozen statistical datasets from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Uniform Crime Report, a study by the Department of Justice (1997) found that 58% of convicted rape and sexual assault offenders serving time in State prisons had a child victim. More specifically, nearly 4 in 10 of these imprisoned sex offenders reported that their victims were aged 12 or younger (Department of Justice, 1997).

Typical of most violent crimes, sexual offenders are more likely to be White males who have had a previous connection or relationship with their victim. It has been found that offenders in prison for sexual assault were 50% more likely to be White than Black and to be an average 34 years of age at the time of the crime (Department of Justice, 1997). Supporting these statistics are studies aimed specifically at child molesters. In documenting the characteristics of released child molesters in 1994, three-fourths (73.2%) out of 4,295 were found to be predominately

non-Hispanic, White males, while only 889 (20.7%) were Black men (Department of Justice, 2003). When it comes to supporting registration laws, many parents fear that a stranger will sexually assault their child (Danni & Hampe, 2000). In actuality, most cases reveal a prior association between the offender and victim. A study of police recorded data found that in 90% of the rape cases of children less than 12 years, the victim knew the offender (Department of Justice, 1997).

#### Theoretical Approaches to Sexual Offenders

For over two decades, various theories have attempted to explain why sex offenders target children. These theories range from multi-layered explanations that focus on the onset and persistence of sexual offending to single-factor theories that reduce sexual deviance to one causal factor. While such academic progress is noteworthy, the same cannot be said of the present theoretical literature involving sex offender reintegration. The implementation of registration and notification laws has not only restricted the freedoms of sex offenders, but they have subsequently allowed increased opportunity for ridicule, shaming, and vigilantism by the community. Despite the

prevalence of such acts, few researchers have attempted to explain the role society plays in an offender's reintegration, nor have they addressed the reasons why punitive sanctions are not longer enough.

### Reintegrative Shaming

One theory that attempts to explain the relationship between criminality and punishment is Braithwaite's Reintegrative Shaming. Many societies, in addition to formal punishments like jail or prison, have also opted to engage in informal sanctions against the offender. These sanctions can include anything from public disapproval and gossip to outright criticism and rejection. As far as sex offenders are concerned, it can be illustrated by a group of community members picketing outside a home to flyer postings giving the details of the crime. Despite such invasive actions, it is believed that these scarlet letter techniques will actually lead to successful offender reintegration. According to Braithwaite (1989), reintegrative shaming can be defined as "expressions of community disapproval, which may range from mild rebuke to degradation ceremonies, are followed by gestures of reacceptance into the community of law abiding citizens" (p. 55). Braithwaite believed that informal sanctions

followed by some level of forgiveness would not only satisfy a disgruntled community, but also serve as a form of repentance for the offender.

To understand the extent of this theory, it is important to review the definition of the word shame. According to the Harvard Law Review (2003), shaming sanctions are "punishments that are directed primarily at publicizing an offender's illegal conduct in a way intended to reinforce the prevailing social norms that disapprove of such behavior and thus to induce an unpleasant emotional experience in the offender" (p. 2187). The key to its effectiveness is in the moral regrets the offender has for the offenses he or she has committed. Essentially, the shaming process is meant to moralize with the offender the reasons why his or her criminality is unacceptable (Braithwaite, 1989). Once the offender realizes this, the reintegration process is said to begin.

Referring back to the Reintegrative Shaming Theory itself, the shaming process can occur in a variety of ways. Since the goal of such punishments is successful reentry, shaming must be delivered within four defined contexts. First, it is believed that the bonds of love and respect between the offender and the person doing the shaming must

always be maintained (Hay, 2001). Reinforcing this belief, Braithwaite (1989) noted that "the specific and general effects of shame will be greater for persons who remain strongly attached in relationships of interdependency and affection" (p. 81). When those bonds disappear, the interdependency between the two parties is no longer strong enough to keep the offender from re-offending.

The second context under which shame must be administered deals with the sanction itself. Hay (2001) notes that shame should be directed at the wrongful act the offender committed and not necessarily on the offender himself or herself. The idea behind this requirement is that shaming the offender will in no way help in his or her reintegration. In fact, if a person experiences a significant amount of criticism and disapproval, he or she may turn away from normalcy altogether and find socially disapproving behavior to engage in. To prevent such occurrences, the focus should be on the "evil" act while "striving to preserve the identity of the offender as essentially good" (Braithwaite, 1989, p. 101).

The third requirement of using any type of shaming sanction involves the way in which these punishments are administered. Essentially, shaming needs to be delivered

within a context of social approval (Hay, 2001).

Braithwaite's theory goes on to stress the importance of understanding what is socially approved by looking at the relationships that are specifically disapproved. For this theory to be effective, Braithwaite requires that such instances of shaming and other disapproving behavior be complimented with social rewarding. In other words, the offender's positive behaviors must be praised so that he or she is not merely receiving negative feedback for the actions of their past.

The fourth and final requirement of reintegrative shaming deals with the aftermath of such actions. According to Hay (2001), at some point the shaming needs to be "terminated with gestures or ceremonies of forgiveness" (p. 134). The offender needs to know that at some point in the future the shaming and punishments will cease and instead be replaced with reacceptance. It is also believed that forgiveness of the offender can likely reduce the probability of his or her future criminality. Zhang and Zhang (2004) note that without some level of forgiveness, the offender may soon believe in his or her criminal role and "engage in behaviors consistent with one's newly developed identity" (p. 437). It is this

fourth requirement that essentially completes the Reintegrative Shaming Theory.

Finally, it is believed that when all four of these components are combined with the shaming sanction, the Reintegrative Shaming Theory will be an effective way of controlling crime. However, for this to actually occur, the theory reinforces the importance of the offender's family and friends in the shaming process. According to Braithwaite (1989), shaming against the offender must come from significant persons in his or her life and not just impersonal ones. The reasoning behind this is that most people tend to be more concerned with what their family thinks of them as opposed to the opinions of total strangers. In addition, most people are more so willing to correct bad behavior if they know their significant others disapprove (Zhang & Zhang, 2004). Ultimately, if communities agree to engage in reintegrative shaming, scholars believe that informal sanctions can be an important unification step for both the offender and the community.

#### Disintegrative Shaming

Despite how revolutionary and optimistic Braithwaite's theory sounds, reintegrative shaming is hardly the

punishment that sex offenders receive. Rarely do parents, victims, or even community members ever reaccept a sex offender back into society. In fact, once a sex offender has been identified, the goal of many is to have him or her banished from their neighborhood. This type of behavior is a direct example of Braithwaite's lesser-known theory, Disintegrative Shaming. According to the author, disintegrative shaming or stigmatization "divides the community by creating a class of outcasts" (p. 55). The antithesis of reintegrative shaming, this type of informal punishment makes no effort to forgive the offender. Instead, it focuses solely on stigmatization, which Hay (2001) defines as "shaming in the absence of reintegration" (p. 134).

In reference to the four measures of reintegrative shaming, disintegration lacks all qualities. There is no attempt by the community or victim to show love or respect for the offender as stated in the first component. In fact, through stigmata, it is often the goal of the community to ensure that the offender knows he or she is not welcomed. An example of this type of behavior is evident every time it is publicly known that a sex offender is moving into a new neighborhood. As far as the second



and third measures are concerned, disintegrative shaming makes no attempt to direct the shame elsewhere nor place any regard for social approval. People using disintegrative shaming make it clear that they are targeting the offender and that he or she is the one to blame. Also, most people using this type of informal punishment rarely care about whether their actions go against social approval. Lastly, and perhaps signifying the greatest difference from reintegrative shaming, is the idea of forgiveness. According to Braithwaite (1989), when an offender is outcasted "degradation ceremonies are not followed by ceremonies to decertify deviance" (p. 101). If anything offenders who undergo disintegrative shaming experience increased feelings of alienation and separation from society.

Theorists are quick to argue against the use of disintegrative shaming because the result could lead to an increase or relapse of the offender's criminality. In fact, those offenders who are continuously branded a "deviant" are more likely to associate with subcultures that have had similar negative experiences. Due to all this, many agree that "stigmatization is the most important of those life circumstances that increase the attraction of

individuals to criminal subcultures" (Braithwaite, 1989, p. 67). The belief is that continuous degradation and labeling will soon pose a threat to the offender's identity. Soon they will start to reject their rejecters and use subcultures, often criminal, for a solution to their problems.

These subcultures willingly accept the branded offenders, but at a price. It is believed that these groups set up status systems and not only "spur each other to commit crimes, but also facilitate those crimes by providing the support of an integrated and committed group" (Harvard Law Review, 2003, p. 2193). Thus, communities who are engaging in stigmatization are inadvertently "nurturing criminal subculture formation (Braithwaite, 2000, p. 288). Once the group has welcomed an offender in, any further attempts by the community to shame him or her will be ineffective.

Despite the benefits that the reintegrative shaming theory proposes, society currently operates under the guise of disintegration when it comes to sex offenders. The advent of harsher registration and notification laws in addition to the rising number of informal punishments being used only illustrates society's refusal to allow

reintegration. Unfortunately the current trend of shaming without forgiveness only gives rise to the likelihood of offender recidivism. Braithwaite (2000) notes that offenders, tired of being stigmatized, will inevitably switch from law-abiding to law-breaking behaviors.

## Sex Offender Registration Laws

### Evolution of Registration Laws

According to the Department of Justice (1998), California became the first state in 1947 to establish laws requiring a registry for sex offenders. Several states including Arizona, Alabama, Florida, Nevada, and Ohio followed suit in the 1950's and 60's. All was quiet until California again updated their registration list by applying it to juveniles. Despite how revolutionary these laws appeared, no decade saw a surge of intense scrutiny in the way child sexual offenders were handled than that of the 1990's.

In 1989 a young boy named Jacob Wetterling was kidnapped at gunpoint in St. Cloud, Minnesota, after riding his bike to a local video store. Unbeknownst to local police and the community, convicted sex offenders had been living in halfway houses in and around the region of St.

Cloud. Five years later, with still no sign of Jacob or his abductor, the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act passed. This act mandated that all states establish a registration program for sex offenders living within their state (Freeman-Longo, 2001). The act further required that each state follow four guidelines: 1) states must require certain offenders to register; 2) states must maintain accurate registries and verify addresses quarterly and annually according to threat of the offender; 3) states must work with neighboring states and distribute registry to law enforcement; and 4) states can disclose information to the public when they believe their safety is at risk (Department of Justice, 1998).

The first amendment to the Wetterling Act came when seven-year old Megan Kanka was raped and murdered by a twice-convicted child molester living in her Hamilton, New Jersey neighborhood. As a result of the young girl's death and public outcry, Megan's Law was enacted in October 1996. The law required all states to develop notification systems that would allow public access to known sex offenders within the community (Freeman-Longo, 2001). It was no longer the discretion of law enforcement to tell a

community about a violent sex offender as stated in the Wetterling Act. This requirement became known as "mandatory community notification" (Department of Justice, 1998). Because of the Wetterling Act and Megan's Law, all fifty states, including the District of Columbia, now have some type of public sex offender registration system.

#### Wisconsin Sex Offender Registration and Notification

Following the lead of many other states, Wisconsin enacted its own version of Megan's Law in 1995. Under section 301.45(2)(a) of the statutes, Wisconsin now requires offenders to register with the state's Department of Corrections (DOC) and "provide their name, address, physical description, place of employment or school, and the offense for which they were convicted" (*Kaminski v. Schwarz*, 2000/2001). Those individuals required to register must have been convicted of certain named offenses. Additionally, Wisconsin courts have the discretion of mandating offender registration for other unnamed offenses (Blair, 2005).

According to Wisconsin law, all sex offenders are required to undergo some level of community notification. While there is no uniform way to handle the notification

process, Wisconsin chooses to organize sex offenders according to levels. A Level 1 offender is considered to be of the least risk and notification of his or her whereabouts is only known to law enforcement. At Level 2, notification of a sex offender is distributed to schools and other professionals. Those categorized in a Level 3 are sex offenders warrant of community notification (Thomas, 2003).

Additionally, the DOC is also required to disseminate a Special Bulletin Notification (SBN) for certain high-risk offenders. Blair (2005) defines these bulletins as a written notification process of an offender's detailed background and information. Special Bulletin Notifications must be issued to law enforcement officials within ten days prior to an offender's release from incarceration. Sexually Violent Persons, or those who have been twice convicted of a sexual offense, are typical offenders requiring a SBN.

#### Additional Legislation and Enhancements

More recent legislation in Wisconsin has been initiated to not only crack down on a sex offender's freedom, but also keep communities safe. Wisconsin governor Jim Doyle introduced one such act, entitled the

Sex Offender Apprehension and Felony Enforcement (SAFE) Initiative, in 2005. Essentially, the Initiative's main goals are to prevent sex offenders from becoming anonymous in the community and to apprehend and prosecute those who fail to register (Wisconsin Office of the Governor, 2005).

In addition to SAFE, the Wisconsin governor also made significant changes to the state's sex offender registry system. As of December 2005, community members and parents now have access to the home addresses of registered sex offenders. Along with enhanced photographs and additional crime descriptions, the public will have access to the exact living location of the offender when they use the state's registry website (Wisconsin Office of the Governor, 2005).

As far as surveillance is concerned, Governor Doyle, under Wisconsin's Sexual Predator Law (Chapter 980), has directed the DOC and the Department of Health and Family Services to enforce global positioning system (GPS) monitoring. This latest technology is meant to continuously keep track, twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, of an offender's whereabouts. This type of monitoring system is expected to be used only on the state's most dangerous sexual offenders. Also proposed by

the governor is the idea of lifetime GPS monitoring for future sexual offenders. Those offenders include individuals who have been involuntarily committed and put on supervised community release. Essentially, those future offender's sent to incarceration under the Chapter 980 law would also be subjected to lifetime monitoring, even if they are no longer being supervised in the community. According to the Wisconsin Office of the Governor (2006), there are currently eleven sex offenders in Wisconsin on GPS monitoring.

#### Who is Considered a Sex Offender?

In establishing mandatory registration laws, concern soon developed over who or what was considered a sex offender and how would they be classified. For purposes of definition, Wright (2003) defined a sex offender as "a person or persons who uses or attempts to use physical force on another person, against their will, in an attempt to commit an act intended to provide sexual gratification to the aggressor(s)" (p. 97). However exact this definition may be, determining who will register as a sex offender is a decision left mostly to the individual states.



Under California's Megan's law, for example, there are three classifications of sex offenders that are based on their criminal history and their potential to re-offend. These categories are commonly referred to as "high risk," "serious," and "other." According to the California Department of Justice (2002), offenders classified under the "serious" category have committed at least one of the following crimes: assault with intent to commit rape, oral copulation, or sodomy; rape; sodomy with a minor or by force; lewd or lascivious conduct with a child or a dependent adult; oral copulation with a minor by force; continuous sexual abuse of a child; child molestation; penetration with a foreign object by force; kidnapping with intent to commit specified sex offenses; felony sexual battery; or felony enticement of a child for purpose of prostitution.

Sex offenders are considered "high risk" when they have committed at least one serious crime and have been convicted of multiple violent crimes, at least one of which was a violent sex crime. Sex offenders placed in the "other" category are those convicted of pornography, exhibitionism, misdemeanor sexual battery, incest, or spousal rape.

In the state of Wisconsin, the requirements for registration encompass just as many serious crimes as California. For instance, sex offenders are required to register if they have committed at least one of the following: soliciting a child for prostitution; incest with a child; possession of child pornography; causing a child to view or listen to sexual activity; or sexual exploitation of a child. Similar to California's grouping system, offenders who commit any of the above mentioned crimes in Wisconsin are considered serious offenders (Wisconsin Department of Corrections, n.d.).

For the most part, registration statutes encompass offenses that are a requirement of national registration. Almost all focus some attention on sexual assault or the sexual abuse of a child. Some put more emphasis on violations against children, while others target those who recidivate. There are even states that include relatively mild offenses such as "adultery in Arizona, bigamy in Louisiana, and voyeurism in Ohio" (Bedarf, 1995, p. 888). In the end, individual states have the most discretion in determining who will need to register under Megan's Law.

### How Many People are Registered?

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (2006), as of September 12, 2006 there were approximately 18,714 registered sex offenders. On a national level there are approximately 579,974 registered sex offenders in 50 states and the District of Columbia. This is a substantial increase from the roughly 386,000 registered sex offenders in February 2001 and the 277,000 registrants in April 1998 (Department of Justice, 2002).

### Sex Offender Recidivism

Perhaps adding to the public's fear and resulting support of community notification laws is the assumption that sex offenders will undoubtedly re-offend. Many parents, police officials, and surrounding community members believe it is only a matter of time before an offender recidivates (Broadhurst & Loh, 2003; Hood, Shute, Felzer, & Wilcox, 2002). Perhaps the first challenge for researchers studying sex offender recidivism lies in the term itself.

### Recidivism Defined

Simply stated, recidivism can be defined as "sex offenders committing new crimes" (Hanson, 2000, p. 106).

The problem becomes more apparent when one questions the extent of such "new crimes." For example, some researchers choose to examine three types of recidivist crimes: sexual, non-sexual, and general. Sexual recidivism occurs when a sex offender commits a new sexual crime. Non-sexual recidivism occurs when an offender commits a new crime, however not sexual in nature. General recidivism occurs when a sex offender commits any new crime at all (Hanson & Bussière, 1998). Other researchers have chosen to examine recidivism through the following crime types: sexual, violent non-sexual, violent sexual, and any violent or non-violent crime (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004). The inclusions of violent versus non-violent crimes are meant to identify a broader range of sex offender recidivism.

An additional way of measuring offender recidivism is in terms of judicial response to new crimes. For example, in their follow-up study of sex offender recidivism, Langevin, Curnoe, Fedoroff, Bennett, Langevin, Peever, Pettica, and Sandhu (2004) define the term as any "sex offence re-convictions; any new charge or arrest for sexual offences; any type of new conviction; any type of new charge, self-report; or less often, parole violations or number of court appearances" (p. 533). Despite these

varying approaches to defining sex offender recidivism, many short and long-term studies continue to prove that re-offense rates are not as high as most people believe.

#### Short-term Studies on Recidivism

The results of several short-term studies suggest that the sex offender recidivism rate is lower than originally perceived. For example, Hanson and Bussière (1998) undertook the task of reviewing 61 recidivism studies with information on roughly 29,000 sexual offenders. The researchers found that in a follow-up period of 4 to 5 years, the recidivism rate for sex offenders was 13.4%. In a subsequent study, with a follow-up period of 5 to 6 years, Hanson and Morton-Bourgon (2004) found consistent results. After reviewing 95 different studies, the researchers concluded the sexual recidivism rate was 13.7%. Critics of such findings often argue that a study's follow-up is a deciding factor in terms of outcome.

#### Long-term Studies on Recidivism

When it comes to accurately testing sex offender recidivism rates, many assume that long-term studies will justify the need for harsher punishments and increased community notification. Unfortunately, the results of such studies seem to mimic those of the short-term ones.

According to Hanson (2000), "even with long follow-up periods and thorough searches, studies rarely find sex-offense recidivism rates greater than 40%" (p. 106).

Testing this notion, Hanson, Scott, and Steffy (1995) undertook what has been deemed the longest study concerning sex offender recidivism. Based on a 31 year follow-up period of close to 200 offenders, the researchers found that the sex offenders in question had a 35.1% recidivism rate.

#### Recidivism Study Limitations

One obvious limitation when determining recidivism rates is the fact that not all crimes are reported. Often referred to as the dark figure of crime, many researchers limit their analysis to "discovered acts of the specified behavior" (Doren, 1998, p. 100). Since many unreported crimes are left out of analysis, it is unclear how accurate recidivism rates actually are.

Another limitation lies in the fact that the majority of sex offender studies are based solely on male perpetrators. According to Doren (1998), "base rates for female sex offenders have apparently not been studied" (p. 100). Thus, any conclusions one would make regarding

female offenders would come directly from the results of the male studies.

One last shortcoming deals with the variation between short and long-term recidivism studies. Critics argue that low recidivism rates are directly attributed to short follow-up times. In other words, shorter studies fail to take into account instances such as the long judicial process it may take to arrest or even convict an offender. According to Langevin et al. (2004), "changes in the law or in the arrest practices of police over an extended period of time can artificially influence the recidivism statistics" (p. 534). The relatively new Megan's Law is an example of such a change in the law. With its implementation and other laws similar to it, recidivism researchers can presumably expect variations in recidivism rates.

### Varying Views and Megan's Law

#### Arguments For Megan's Law

One obvious benefit resulting from these public notification laws is the community's ability to be informed and protect themselves. Many supporters of registration laws believe protecting America's children is far more

important than the rights of sex offenders. Berliner (1996) points out that the purpose of sex offender registration was to limit an offender's opportunity to victimize children. The objective was not to protect sex offenders living in the communities. Others believe notification will allow citizens to be more pro-active when it comes to potential criminal behavior instead of waiting to be victimized. Through notification, the public will be able to identify and report suspicious behavior by sex offenders that may turn into criminal behavior if ignored (Finn, 1997).

Another benefit that has resulted from sex registration laws is their ability to identify or dismiss possible suspects. The registries have become a resourceful tool for law enforcement to solve crimes that involve sexual assault. With valuable information such as the suspect's background, criminal history, and modus operandi, agencies have been able to link or exonerate certain offenders from a crime (Scholle, 2000). It appears that this benefit not only aids law enforcement, but it is considered useful by sex offenders as well. Based on self-reports from sex offenders, it is suggested that the registration requirement is "minimally invasive" and one



that protects the offender from being wrongly accused (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000). In fact, one respondent admitted: "I see it as a safeguard, primarily because if something does happen, a victim does claim that I was the victimizer and there's a DNA sample, I can prove it wasn't me" (p. 381).

#### Arguments Against Megan's Law

While there has been much support for Megan's Law several opponents point to the additional punishment that these laws inflict on sex offenders. According to Scholle (2000), the registration requirement violates the civil rights of the sex offender by "imposing additional punishment on them after they have paid their debt to society" (p. 22). Registration laws have become a type of double jeopardy, where sex offenders are tried not only in the court, but in the community as well. Zevitz and Farkas (2000) also suggest that public notification invades the privacy of the offender who has served his or her sentence for the crime. It appears these laws offer no solace for an offender who has paid his or her debt to society.

Another argument against Megan's Law is the increased vigilantism that may arise from people within the community. Often times, citizens try to inflict further

punishment on a sex-offender as a result of seeing their profile on a registry. Tewksbury (2005) found this to be the case in his study of 121 registered sex offenders. Results showed that 41.7% of the offenders were harassed in person, 11.1% were assaulted and 38.9% were threatened by phone and/or mail. In many cases innocent people are mistaken for sex offenders. In one particular case-study, a man was severely beaten and needed to be hospitalized after someone broke into his home believing he was a sex offender (Freeman-Longo, 2001).

## Effects of Megan's Law on Sex Offenders

### Social and Psychological Effects

Though there has been a fair amount of literature dedicated to the benefits and consequences of Megan's Law, little has been devoted to the effects these statutes have on sex offenders themselves. Often times, these registration laws make it very difficult for sex offenders to reintegrate into society after prison. A study by Zevitz and Farkas (2000) attempted to document these difficulties through face-to-face interviews with 30 sex offenders in several Wisconsin communities. The study found that 83% of the participating offenders suffered some

type of exclusion of residence, while 57% had suffered a loss of employment. Further research looking at the proximity restrictions that sex offenders must abide by found similar results. For instance, in a study involving 135 sex offenders in two Florida cities, Levenson and Cotter (in press) reported that 50% of the respondents were forced to move from their residence due to their location near a school, park, day care center, or school bus stop. They also found that 25% were unable to return to their homes after their conviction.

Many times these registration laws have a psychological or emotional effect on a sex offender. Looking at the emotional consequences of Megan's Law, Levenson and Cotter (2005) found that out of 183 sex offender participants, the majority reported feelings of stress, isolation, loss of relationships, fear, shame, embarrassment, and hopelessness due to their registration. These types of feelings form a constant pattern among registered offenders.

A study measuring attitudinal effects found sex offenders to have a high level of shame as a result of their registration (Tweksbury, 2005). Many of these feelings of emotional turmoil seemed to be a direct result

of their social effects. For example, in the previously noted study involving proximity restrictions, almost 60% of the 135 participant offenders agreed that they had suffered emotionally due to their rigid living situations (Levenson & Cotter, in press). It appears then that these social and psychological effects are a revolving door sex offenders must overcome in order to comfortably assimilate into society.

#### Effects on Family, Friends and Victims

In addition to the registrants, Megan's Law seems to generate negative effects on a sex offender's family, friends, and their victims as well. In a study of 121 sex offenders, Tewksbury (2005) found that "more than half of all responding registrants reported having lost a friend as a result of registration and public knowledge of their sexual offending" (p. 76). Many sex offenders experience additional struggles and setbacks at the loss of close, personal relationships. In fact, support from family and friends are believed to be crucial for a successful reintegration (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000). Often times, a person's mere association with a known sex offender produces unwanted effects. Edwards and Hensley (2001) note that prisoners have spent years in a prison system where

food, housing, social support and the like were routinized and consistent. Upon release, most offenders lack that support from family. For those that do have it, "the communities ostracism of the offender now often extends to anyone willing to support or assist him or her" (p. 90).

Registration laws have also been accused of re-victimizing the victim. According to Levenson and Cotter (2005), "notification may create a negative effect on offenders' family members or lead to the inadvertent identification of victims" (p. 51). In many cases, the victims of sex offenders have a pre-existing relationship with their offender. Thus, the identification of a sex offender and his or her crime may result in additional pain for the victim. An example of such an effect was documented in a case study by Freeman-Longo (2001). In this instance, the wife and family of a sex offender were harassed after his name and address were posted on an internet registration site. The sex offender in this case was still serving his sentence in prison and his victim happened to be his daughter.

#### Effects on Sex Offender Treatment and Recidivism

Another concern of registration laws centers on a sex offender's ability to continue treatment. Many times sex

offenders are released into a community with harsh social and psychological effects. They may also lose ties to meaningful personal relationships. All of these direct effects hinder sex offenders from living functional, crime-free lives. According to Jones (1999), "such exposure to a nonsupportive and contentious environment may cause offenders to go underground instead of seek or continue treatment" (para. 17). Others believe that registration will have an adverse impact on treatment for those who would typically do favorably (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000)

As far as recidivism is concerned, very few studies have assessed the relationship between subsequent offending and registration laws. Some believe that community notification only entices offenders to continue criminal behavior. According to Scholle (2002), "The identification of sex offenders in the community may result in a 'self-fulfilling prophecy'; that is, offenders may behave in a manner consistent with societal expectations" (p. 22). Still others are quite unsure whether a relationship exists at all.

Perhaps the most prominent research attempt looking at recidivism rates among registered sex offenders occurred in Washington State. Schram and Milloy (1995) began by

matching ninety sex offenders who were registered to ninety offenders who were not. Results showed that the recidivists in the community notification group were rearrested sooner than those in the non-notification group. However, because they found that the levels of re-offending for each group were similar (4.5 years), they had to ultimately conclude that no significant difference existed between the two groups.

### Limitations and Suggestions for Future

#### Limitations

One recurrent limitation in studying sex offenders' reintegration is the lack of sufficient studies documenting the process. As of their publication date, Zevitz and Farkas (2000) noted how "almost none of the empirical studies on community notification has examined the effects of notification on sex offenders, their experiences in the community, and their reaction to the law" (p. 378). Most research has been done on the registration laws themselves and not on the sex offender. Included in the minimal research is how law enforcement and probation/parole officers have responded to the demand for increased supervision. There is also relatively limited information

on how the community adjusts and their reactions to sex offender notification. It appears that much more research needs to be done to accurately test the effectiveness of such laws.

Another limitation centers around using sex-offenders themselves to report their experiences post-incarceration. For example, in a self-reported study aimed at identifying the consequences of notification, several offenders noted the positive aspects of registration laws. One interviewee suggested that the notification requirement progressed his treatment process by helping him understand and take responsibility for his crime (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000). While this appears to be a positive outlook toward community notification, the offender may have been exaggerating or even lying about his experiences to make treatment seem effective. It is also fair to say that in many studies involving self-reporting, sex offenders were not the best judges of their own risks. Levenson and Cotter (2005) noted that participants may have distorted their own risk as a defensive function or even minimized it to please treatment providers or researchers.



### Suggestions for Future

For future studies, researchers need to find more effective ways of measuring community notification effects rather than relying solely on a sex offender's perspective. It may also suit researchers to consider the limitations of applicability before applying their findings to all sex offenders. After all, different states have different registration requirements. Therefore, a study looking at the effects of Megan's Law in California may not have the same results in a study done in Minnesota.

### Current Study

There exists very limited research that addresses the effects of Megan's Law on the reintegration of sex offenders. What researchers do know is that sex offenders, having to publicly declare their location, offense type, and prior criminal record, are bound to experience unwanted consequences. It has been readily suggested that these laws "do not address or even consider the offender's ability to successfully reintegrate into society or to obtain even the most basic human needs such as shelter, social contact and assistance, and employment" (Edwards & Hensley, 2001, p. 85). While it is evident that the

requirement produces an array of social and psychological effects for the offenders, research on the extent and types of these effects are still unclear. Similarly, research is also limited on the effects that increased media attention and public opinion have on the reintegration of a sex offender. Based on this lack of extensive research, it is necessary to reexamine the extent mandatory registration has on sex offenders.

The literature describes several negative social and psychological consequences that occur for registered sex offenders trying to assimilate into society. One such social consequence centers on a sex offender's ability to secure and maintain adequate housing. In many instances, the notoriety from the registration process results in the loss of, or the inability to acquire, residence for sex offenders (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000). To further examine the effects of registration on a sex offender's housing situation, this study explores the following research question:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the notification requirement in Megan's Law and a sex offender's ability to find suitable housing, as experienced by probation and parole practitioners?

In addition to social consequences, sex offenders must undoubtedly deal with swaying public perceptions and opinions. While many people support the idea of treatment and rehabilitative resources for sex offenders, many others vehemently disagree. In fact, many people in society agree that treatment considerations should come secondary to public safety and all resources that will effectively establish this (Conroy, 2006). Often, these "public safety" measures include polygraph testing, GPS monitoring, and the like. To further examine the effects of public opinion on an offender's ability to reintegrate, this study explores the following research questions:

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions and attitudes of the media in regards to the treatment of sex offenders?

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions and attitudes of the media in regards to the containment (control) of sex offenders?

While many of the effects of registration laws have yet to be determined, the above stated research questions are an attempt to fill this void.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Original Research Study

For this study, secondary analysis is used. In the original research study entitled, "Impact Assessment of Sex Offender Notification on Wisconsin Communities, 1998", Zevitz and Farkas (1998) gathered primary research information from different members of Wisconsin communities to assess their experiences of the sex offender notification process in the state. More specifically, the research study focused on citizens of the community, law enforcement, and probation and parole agents to determine the effects of sex offender registration and community notification.

Data instruments used in the research study consisted of three surveys, each containing open and closed-ended questions. The data collection consisted of three parts, each part involving one survey, all conducted from January 1998 through mid-September 1998. The first survey involved 704 neighborhood residents from 22 community notification meetings in Wisconsin (Part 1). Meetings were held during the evening hours at school auditoriums and participants

were asked to fill out the questionnaire prior to their departure. The attendance ranged from half a dozen people at one meeting to over one hundred at another. A sample of this questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

In Part 2 of the study, a statewide survey of 312 police and sheriff agencies was implemented. This part of the study aimed to learn more about law enforcement responsibilities on community notification. In this case, participants were mailed out surveys and provided a self-addressed stamped envelope to return them in (Appendix B). In Part 3 of the study, a statewide survey of 128 probation and parole agents and their supervisors was conducted. In this case, the aim was to survey Sex Offender Intensive Supervision Program (SO-ISP) agents, SO-ISP back-up agents, and those with a high number of sex offenders in their caseloads. A sample of this questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

Within the surveys of community members (Part 1), participants were asked a number of questions including their opinions of the meeting, the believed purpose of the meeting, outcomes, and their concern level after the meeting. Variables in the survey of law enforcement (Part 2) included questions on the type of agency, policies

dealing with registered sex offenders, community notification about sex offenders, and sex offenders' risk to the community. In the surveys of probation and parole officers (Part 3), variables focused on the number of Sex Offender Intensive Supervision Program (SO-ISOP) agents, number of child or adult sex offenders on probation or parole, and the amount of contact with high-risk or medium-risk sex offenders (ICPSR # 3015, 1998).

In the survey of community members (Part 1), the sample consisted of 22 community notification meetings located in 16 different locations in Wisconsin. However, the system used to target these particular samples was not discussed. In the survey of law enforcement agencies (Part 2), the 312 participants were a mixture of large and smaller populated jurisdictions around the state. Of the 312 participating agencies, 72 were from the sheriff's department and 240 were from police agencies. In surveying probation and parole agents (Part 3), the population of Sex Offender Intensive Supervision (SO-ISP) officers, SO-ISP backups, and their unit supervisors were sampled. Also included in the sample were those agents with a large number of sex offender caseloads (ISPSR # 3015, 1998).

### Current Study

The current study included a number of variables from the survey administered to probation and parole officers (Part 3). No variables measured in the survey of community members (Part 1) are used since no questions in the original study address the effects of sex offender registration.

Additionally, prior to testing the hypotheses, an analysis of Part 2 of the original study was performed to determine what variables were related to community notification and its effects. A review of Part 2, a statewide survey of 312 police and parole agencies, found a few inconsistencies. It was the intention of the current study to use a majority of open-ended questions found in Part 2 as a catalyst for pertinent information. These questions asked respondents to not only describe problems they have encountered by way of a particular sex offender, but also to indicate how much media interest played a role in those difficulties. Unfortunately, at the time of the current analyses, neither the coded answers, nor the original responses to the open-ended questions could be provided. Further analysis of the variables in Part 2 also proved their use limiting. Based on these factors, the

secondary research study chose to omit the use of all variables from Part 2 of the original study.

Thus, Part 3 became the sole basis of analysis for the current research project. One additional discrepancy that bears mention lies with the survey sample. In the original research project, the researchers performed a statewide survey of 128 probation and parole agents. However, upon review of the data set, the current study found a total of only 77 respondents in the survey. At the time of the current study analysis, no explanation could be provided for the missing sample.

In modifying the existing research project, this study focuses solely on the results dealing with the effects of community notification. More specifically, this study looks at the experiences both the sex offender and members of the community endure as a direct result of the registration requirement. Using bivariate analysis, the current research study focuses on particular qualitative variables, as stated in the questionnaire from the original ICPSR research project # 3015.

Particularly, in the survey of probation and parole officers (Part 3), a number of open ended questions are analyzed: the number of sex offenders under probation, the



number of sex offenders under parole, the impact of media interest on the offender's release, the impact of media interest on treatment options, and the way society views sex offender reintegration.

In order to better understand the data being analyzed, the current study organized several variables into scales. For instance, the variable titled "Treatment" is comprised of the following three scale items: denial focus treatment, sex offender treatment, and aftercare treatment. Similarly, another scale for the "containment" variable exists to include: DNA testing, polygraph testing, electronic monitoring, restrictions on pornography, implementation of a curfew, and strict monitoring of an offender's physical appearance.

According to Pallant (2005), a scale's reliability is often determined by its internal consistency. The researcher defines this as "the degree to which the items that make up the scale 'hang together'" (p. 90). A scale is believed to have good internal consistency if the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is above .7. In the current study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the treatment scale was .716. Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha

coefficient for the containment scale was .867. Both of these values prove both scales to be reliable.

### Validity and Reliability

In the original research study there were a few problems concerning validity and reliability. The first problem centers around the open-ended questions within the data instruments. In the survey of probation and parole officers (Part 3), for example, the researchers failed to supply the coded responses to the open-ended questions. As a result, the validity and reliability of this particular data instrument cannot truly be tested. Readers have no way of determining whether the results accurately reflect the concepts it intended to measure. Also, there is no way of knowing whether the same results would occur if the study were re-tested. To the original researchers' credit, it was noted that while the information was not available for the release of this version, the information would be added when it became available. To account for the problems of survey validity and reliability, the current research project attempts to code and provide the results of all open-ended questions.

Another reliability concern exists in the way the surveys were administered. For example, at the community notification meetings (Part 1), participants were asked to fill out their surveys prior to leaving the meeting. This meant that many, if not most, sat and listened to the concerns over sex offenders living in their neighborhoods prior to filling out the survey. Therefore, the researchers would not know if the answers given by the participants were a true reflection of their opinions or just an influence of the meeting. Without a pre-test to assess a community member's true feelings, reliability threats may exist.

In the case of the survey administered to law enforcement agencies (Part 2) and the survey given to probation and parole officers (Part 3), reliability concerns also exist. In these instances, officers may have felt forced to complete such surveys for fear of reprimand or consequences from their superiors. Also, many may have felt the need to give off a good impression of how their agency deals with sex offender notification. It is possible that these influences could have interfered with the study's reliability.

Aside from the open-ended questions in the survey, the validity within the original study appeared to accurately reflect the concepts it intended to measure. For example, the study intended to look at the overall experiences of the state of Wisconsin on sex offender reintegration from the vantage point of certain groups affected by this policy. The researchers fulfilled this interest by distributing surveys to community members, law enforcement and probation and parole agencies-all people that have contact with such registered sex offenders.

#### Definitions of Variables

A few key terms are defined to understand the extent of the original study. The first variable in need of definition is the term 'registered sex offender.' The decision requiring a sex offender to register is one left mostly to the discretion of individual states. In Wisconsin, the requirements for registration are not as lenient as other states. For example, an offender must register if he or she is convicted of one or more of the following offenses: first, second, or third degree sexual assault of an adult or child; sexual exploitation by a therapist; false imprisonment; kidnapping; rape; incest;

sexual intercourse with a child; indecent behavior with a child; child enticement; use of a computer to facilitate a sex crime; prostitution; and the possession of child pornography (Wisconsin Department of Corrections, n.d.). Thus, for the purposes of understanding the original research study, a sex offender must register if he or she has committed any of the above crimes.

Another variable in need of clarification is the term 'community notification.' Established in all fifty states including the District of Columbia and the Federal Government, these notification laws refer to the "dissemination of identifying information to citizens and community organizations about convicted sex offenders who are released into the community" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001, p. 1). There is no uniform way of notifying a community about the release of a sex offender. Instead, the decision is again left to the individual states. In Wisconsin, responsibility is given to local and county law enforcement agencies. They are also the ones who determine the manner and extent of the notification, as well as what information should be given about a sex offender to the public (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000).

### Original Study Limitations

Adding to the questionable validity and reliability, one limitation that arises from the study centers around the sampling measures. It appears that in failing to identify the coding responses from the data instruments, the researchers also fail to explain their sampling procedures. For the survey of community members (Part 1), there is no explanation as to how the researchers acquired their participants. The data set only mentions that 704 neighborhood residents attended 22 community notification meetings at school auditoriums. There is no mention of how these participants came to be a part of the study in the first place. Thus, the reader is left to assume that these participants were possibly part of a convenience sample. There is also no explanation as to why or how the researchers targeted the communities. There is no mention of a possible sex offender being released in the neighborhood or any other reason why the researchers chose the particular locations that they did.

As with the survey of community members, there is also no explanation of the sampling procedures used to target the law enforcement and probation and parole agencies. The data set does mention that a sample of 312 local and county

law enforcement agencies were selected. They also point out that 128 probation and parole agents were selected. However, these descriptions are the extent of their sampling procedures. Thus, readers are forced to guess the type of probability or non-probability sampling the researchers used to target their participants.

Another limitation of the original study and others like it is the generalization factor. Since different states have different sex offender notification systems, the results in Wisconsin may not typify those of say California or Florida. However, the original researchers do note in a previous study that any concern about generalizing the results is offset by the fact that "Wisconsin is not untypical of other states in its ratio of convicted sex offenders to the general population and in its handling of those individuals within the state's criminal justice system" (Zevitz & Farkas, 2000, p. 388).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS

#### The Sample

In the original research study, Zevitz and Farkas (1998) used primary information from various law enforcement representatives to assess their experience of the sex offender notification process in Wisconsin. The purpose of the current study is to analyze the effects that media interest, as a result of Megan's Law, has on sex offender reintegration.

#### Descriptive Statistics

There were a total of 77 respondents in the sample. Table 1 provides a description of the probation and parole agents' responses in the current analysis. Of the total respondents, a majority, 53.2% (41), characterized their supervising area as predominately urban. This was followed by 24.7% (19) of respondents with a predominately rural supervising area. Additionally, approximately 27 (50.9%) respondents indicated they had a caseload of 0-50 sex offender probationers, followed by 15 (28.3%) respondents with 101 or more offenders. Similarly, approximately 40



(76.9%) respondents reported they had 0-50 sex offender parolees on their caseload. This was followed by only 8 (15.4%) agents with more than 100 parolee offenders under their supervision.

Table 1. Description of Wisconsin Probation and Parole Agents' Supervising Area and Caseload

Variable	Characteristic	Probation		Parole	
		f	%	F	%
Supervising Area	Urban	30	56.6	30	57.7
	Suburban	6	11.3	5	9.60
	Rural	15	28.3	15	28.8
Caseload	0-50	27	50.9	40	76.9
	51-100	11	20.8	4	7.70
	101 or more	15	28.3	8	15.4
Field Unit Agents	1-10	19	36.5	19	36.5
	11-20	32	61.5	32	62.5
	21 or more	1	1.90	1	1.90

## Testing the Research Questions

### Research Question One

As previously stated, research question one sought to examine the relationship between the notification requirement in Megan's Law and a sex offender's ability to find suitable housing, based on experiences by Wisconsin probation and parole agents. To test this, the two variables, media interest and placement difficulty, were examined. In the original study, the researchers asked the probation and parole agents a number of questions regarding

community notification. One such question dealt specifically with media interest in sex offender cases. Based on this, the independent variable used in the current study dealt with the types of sex offender cases related to media interest. As far as the dependent variable is concerned, difficulties arranging placement for offenders in the community was used.

#### Research Question One Results

A crosstabulation of the two variables garnered a total of 77 useable responses. Of the 77, 15 (29.4%) respondents noted that there was not only media interest in their sex offender case, but also difficulties in finding placement. Further statistical analysis produced a chi-square value of 5.373 with a significance value of  $p=.020$ . See Table 2 below. In this case, because the significance value is .05 or less, the secondary study can safely conclude that the results are significant. However, analyses also found the relationship to be a weak one at best ( $\phi=.298$ ). Thus, it is concluded that a relationship, although minimal, does in fact exist between community notification and an offender's ability to secure housing.

Table 2. Media Interest Effects on Sex Offender Placement

Media Interest	Placement Difficulty		$\chi^2$
	Yes	No	
Yes	15	36	5.37*
No	1	25	

\*  $p < .05$

### Research Question Two

As previously noted, research question two attempted to understand the perceptions and attitudes the media had in regards to the treatment of sex offenders. In addressing the question, a variety of variables were combined to explore the relationship between media and treatment measures. To account for those measures, a scale was created using the following variables: denial focus treatment, sex offender treatment, and aftercare treatment. The context in which the three variables were used in the original study was to distinguish between whether offenders have access to such programs while on probation or parole. In the current study however, the scale was created to understand the relationship, if any, between treatment programs and media interest.

In the original study, the researchers asked the respondents a number of questions regarding Special

Bulleting Notification (SBN) cases. Essentially, this secondary analysis focused on one particular question regarding the circumstances that have led an SBN case to become a community notification case. One of the circumstances, namely media interest in the case, became the independent variable used in this study.

#### Research Question Two Results

The first step in analyzing the treatment measures was to explore their frequency, beginning with denial focus. Sixty-five out of 77 agents (84.4%) have denial focus treatment programs in their jurisdiction for sex offenders to attend. Additionally, a large number of agents (n=72, 93.5%) have sex offender treatment programs for those on their caseload while 54(70.1%) have some type of aftercare program. Table 2 provides a description of variables that make up the treatment category.

Testing for Statistical Significance. To begin, each treatment variable was crosstabulated with the independent variable, beginning with denial focus. Tests of significance produced a chi-square result of .000 with a significance value of  $p = .685$ . Based on these results, it is safe to assume that no statistically significant relationship exists.

The next variable measured, sex offender treatment programs, produced a chi-square result of .000 with a non-significance level of .952. The aftercare treatment produced similar results, with a chi-square of .044 with a non-significance level of .834. Thus, it is safe to conclude that no statistically significant relationship exists between media and treatment effects.

Table 3. Media Interest Effects on Treatment Variables

Variable	Media Interest		$x^2$
	Yes	No	
Denial Focus Treatment			
Yes	14	50	(n.s.)
No	2	10	
Sex Offender Treatment			
Yes	15	56	(n.s.)
No	1	4	
Aftercare Treatment			
Yes	12	41	(n.s.)
No	4	19	

Despite the non-significant findings resulting from the chi-square measures, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. To begin, the categorical, independent variable used was media interest. The continuous, dependent variable was the newly created variable, "treatment."

"Treatment" was comprised of denial focus, sex offender treatment, and aftercare. In this case, the t-test found a significance value of  $p = .655$ . Thus, the results indicate that there is no significant difference between the groups.

Table 4. Treatment Scale T-Test

Variable	N	Mean	s.d.	T
<b>Use of Treatment Measures</b>				
Yes	16	2.56	.892	
No	60	2.45	.891	(n.s.)

### Research Question Three

The purpose of research question three was to explore the perceptions and attitudes of the media in regards to the various control measures used on sex offenders. To address the question, a variety of variables were grouped together to test the relationship between containment measures and media. To account for containment measures, the following variables were used: DNA testing, electronic monitoring, the implementation of a curfew, polygraph testing, restrictions on pornography, and sex offender appearance. The variable of DNA testing distinguishes

between whether an offender must provide a DNA sample as a special condition of his or her probation/parole sentence. The variable, electronic monitoring, separates all those required to undergo the sanction from those not required. The curfew variable distinguishes between those who must abide by a set of time restrictions while on probation or parole and those who do not. The variable, polygraph testing, identifies the number of offenders who must undergo periodic lie detection while on probation or parole. The variable concerning pornography identifies the number of offenders required to abstain from illicit material from those with no such restriction. Finally, the variable regarding offender appearance is meant to identify the number of probationers and parolees who must not alter their physical look.

### Research Question Three Results

Mirroring the process performed with the treatment variables, the first step in analyzing containment measures was to explore their frequencies. Not surprising, a large number of respondents in the sample (n=64, 83.1%) require some type of DNA sampling as a special condition of a sex offender's probation or parole. Out of 71 respondents, an

overwhelming majority (n=68, 88.3%) of respondents require some type of electronic monitoring of offenders on their caseload. There were a total of 20 respondents (26.0%) who require offenders on their caseload to undergo periodic polygraph examinations. An overwhelming number of agents (n=68, 88.3%) require offenders to refrain from having any type of pornographic material. Finally, these figures are followed by 60 agents who require an abidance of a curfew and 41 agents who require an offender to not alter their appearance. Table 5 provides a description of variables that make up the containment category.

Testing for Statistical Significance. To address research question three, a number of crosstabulations were performed between the independent and dependent variables. The first variable examined was DNA. It appeared that the constant variable, media attention, had no significant effect on DNA. In other words, there was no relationship between media attention and whether a sex offender had to provide a sample of his or her DNA as a sanction. A recode of the variable's attributes into groups of "Yes" and "No" produced a similar outcome ( $p = .864$ ).

The second variable examined was the restriction of pornography. A review of this variable alone indicated



that it only contained one attribute. In other words, when questioned about the frequency of pornography used as a special condition, 87.0% of respondents (n=67) answered "frequently." The remaining 13% (n=10) either left the question blank or noted its non-applicability. Because the variable only had one resulting attribute, no measures of association, including chi-square or phi, could be computed. At face value the only statistic that can be noted are the 13 respondents who not only required no pornographic material as a special condition, but also had media interest in the case. Unfortunately, no statistical measurements could be done to test the relationship, if one existed at all.

The third variable examined was the use of electronic monitoring as a probation and/or parole measure. Once again, results came out non-significant. Attempts to recode the dependent variable into categories of "Yes" and "No" also produced insignificant results ( $p = 1.000$ ).

The fourth variable matched with media interest was whether a polygraph was used on an offender. To begin, the variable was recoded into two categories, "Yes" and "No." Overall, within the new variable, 35 respondents answered "No" and 42 respondents answered "Yes," for a total of 77

viable responses. Despite these attempts, analysis found the relationship to be non-significant ( $p=.624$ ).

The fifth variable examined was whether an offender needed to abide by a curfew. To start, the variable had the following categories: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Frequently, N/A, and Blank. In an attempt to fix the disproportionate numbers that continued to occur, the variable categories were recoded into the following groups: Sometimes and Frequently. Analysis once again found the relationship to be non-significant.

Table 5. Media Interest Effects on Containment Variables

Variable	Media Interest		$\chi^2$
	Yes	No	
DNA Testing			
Yes	14	51	(n.s.)
No	0	3	
Polygraph Testing			
Yes	10	31	(n.s.)
No	6	29	
Electronic Monitoring			
Yes	14	53	(n.s.)
No	1	2	
Pornography Restrictions			
Yes	13	54	n/a
No	n/a	n/a	
Abidance of Curfew			
Yes	6	26	(n.s.)
No	8	29	
Restrictions on Appearance Alteration			
Yes	15	51	(n.s.)
No	1	9	

The same independent-samples t-test was applied to the newly created variable, "containment." The containment scale was comprised of the following: DNA sampling, electronic monitoring, curfew implementation, polygraph testing, pornography restrictions, and sex offender appearance. The t-test resulted in a non-significance value of  $p=.818$  (See Table 6). The results indicate that there was a significant difference in media interest effects between those who had containment measures as a condition of their probation or parole, and those who did not.

Table 6. Containment Scale T-Test

Variable	N	Mean	s.d.	t
<b>Use of Containment Measures</b>				
Yes	16	19.63	7.49	
No	60	20.07	6.60	(n.s.)

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

It appears that the community notification laws in the state of Wisconsin have minimal to no effect on the types of sanctions sex offenders must undergo, while on probation and/or parole. Initial analysis of the research questions found insignificant relationships between media interest and containment or treatment measures. Attempts to recode variables and even manipulate data also proved unsuccessful. Despite this, the secondary research study did identify one significant relationship between media exposure and sex offender placement difficulties.

In regards to research question one, the analysis supported the notion that a relationship exists between the amount of media interest in a sex offender's case and whether he or she will have difficulty finding housing placement, post incarceration. Unfortunately, further statistical analysis also proved that this relationship was minimal, at best. This finding directly contradicts a number of previous studies (Levenson & Cotter, 2005) that have found a strong correlation between media and housing problems.

As far as research question two is concerned, this study concludes that no relationship could be detected between media exposure and the types of treatment programs offered to sex offenders on probation and parole. In other words, a sex offender's placement on the Megan's Law registry had no effect on whether he or she received treatment.

In response to research question three, the study once again concluded that no relationship exists between media interest and control measures. In this case, the notification laws in the state of Wisconsin had no effect on whether an offender was required to undergo any of the widely used containment measures, such as electronic monitoring and DNA sampling.

### Policy Implications

Despite the positive regard and praise resulting from the nationwide implementation of Megan's Law, not all aspects of the law are worth celebrating. In fact, the implication of the significant finding suggests that the community notification process in the state of Wisconsin may actually be causing a disservice to not only the offender in question, but the neighboring community as

well. A sex offender, who has ideally "paid their debt to society" through incarceration, must now successfully reintegrate into a world that is set up for their failure. Lacking one of the basic necessities of life, namely adequate shelter, leaves open the possibility of recidivism and relapse by the offender. While it would be erroneous for each state to eliminate the notification requirement overseeing sex offender reintegration altogether, the issue still needs to be addressed and revisions need to be made.

The findings of this study imply that some type of difficulty is occurring in terms of sex offenders maintaining their placement while on probation and/or parole. While the present study barely breaks the surface of these hardships, it is safe to assume that increased media attention is a key factor that negatively affects an offender's ability to secure a successful placement. When situations like this arise, offenders are often limited to choosing between the fight or flight response, usually succumbing to the latter of the two. To avoid recidivism, perhaps the burden should now be placed on lawmakers to evaluate the true benefits that Megan's Law has for the community against the consequences imposed on the offender.

The state of Wisconsin needs to also be responsible for enforcing the safety and security of all offenders reintegrating. This means that all acts of vigilantism, threats, and even focused media attention need to be handled appropriately and swiftly.

Lastly, the present study's findings suggest that new laws need to be made in order to address the very restrictive existing laws. For example, the recent implementation of Jessica's Law and Megan's Law combined now forbid sex offenders from living within 2000 feet of a school or park (Legislative Analyst Office, 2006). Combine that restriction with the fact that increased media attention almost always means increased uproar over a sex offender's placement, no matter where that may be. The result typically means sex offenders have limited to no placement options. The findings of this study support this notion and urge lawmakers to make necessary changes that will accommodate all parties involved.

### Theoretical Implications

As far as theory is concerned, the findings imply that sex offenders in the state of Wisconsin are experiencing disintegrative shaming mechanisms more often than its

counterpart, reintegrative shaming. As previously noted, the goal of reintegrative shaming is to reaffirm the offenders place in society (McAlinden, 2005). Through mild acts of shaming, society is meant to reaccept and forgive the offender. The premise behind the use of disintegrative shaming, however, is to punish the offender through acts of stigmatization and labeling. The result is a class of social outcasts who often re-offend as a form of survival (McAlinden, 2005).

The analysis of research question one found that the reintegration process for sex offenders on probation and parole is not a smooth one. In fact, it was concluded that sex offenders reentering society have increased difficulty finding suitable housing, post-incarceration. By obstructing one of the basic necessities of life for these offenders, society is essentially illustrating their unwillingness to reaccept this population. As a result, offenders are forced to engage in any means necessary to survive. Unfortunately, many times those survival techniques include recidivism.

Instead of providing an offender with a viable starting point to begin a law-abiding existence, society seems to do the opposite. The mere implementation of laws



such as Megan's Law and Jessica's Law seem to coincide with the tenets of disintegrative shaming. Essentially lawmakers are constantly weighing rehabilitation over risk, and continuously choosing the latter. Thus, instead of probation and parole agents focusing on treatment programs and positive ways to achieve rehabilitation and reacceptance, the laws force them to spend a majority of time waiting for an offender to reoffend.

#### Study Limitations

One key limitation in conducting the secondary research analysis was the discrepancy in sample size. As previously mentioned, the original research study consisted of 128 survey respondents. However, the data set in which the current study is based, consists of only 77 respondents. It is unknown where the data lies for the remaining 51 respondents, if data exists at all. This error in number could give way to varying analysis and potentially significant results.

Another limitation worth mentioning lies with the data itself. Due to the limited number of respondents, a majority of the analyses resulted in error. Because of this, crosstabulations of many of the variables often

produced erroneous messages. Additionally, a majority of the analyses that were meant to uncover measures of association, such as chi-square, could not be trusted because the expected frequencies were too small. Thus the present study was forced to collapse a majority of the variables in order to create a large enough sample pool to run statistical tests. Adding to this, a majority of the respondents in the original study left a question blank or answered that it was not applicable to them. While sufficient for the original study, those options only made the sample size smaller for the secondary study.

One last and yet obvious limitation is that the secondary research is limited to the questions asked in the original study. As the data analyses went on, it became more and more apparent that the current study would not fully uncover the extent community notification affects a sex offender's life. Having to piece together and recode variables only made finding answers more difficult.

#### Suggestions for Future Research

Because of these limitations, it is suggested that future research continue to be done, specifically on the effects of community notification. Researchers should

focus a significant portion of their study interviewing and collecting data from sex offenders themselves. Questions should be aimed at uncovering and understanding the true extent registration and notification laws have on the sample in question. Additionally, the effects media exposure has not only on containment and treatment measures, but on employment opportunities, families, friends, an offender's mental health, the community, and even the victim should be explored.

APPENDIX A

SEX OFFENDER COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex Offender Community Notification Meeting

AUG 25 2000

(PLEASE MARK THE BOX TO INDICATE YOUR RESPONSE)

- 1). How did you first find out about today's meeting?
  1. ☐ Newspaper, radio, television.
  2. ☐ Flyers.
  3. ☐ Local officials (police, alderman, etc.)
  4. ☐ Friend, neighbor or community worker.
  5. ☐ Other. (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
  6. ☐ Not sure.
- 2). In your opinion, what was the purpose of this meeting? (Please check all that apply)
  1. ☐ To inform the community about sex offender registration and community notification legal requirements.
  2. ☐ To inform the community of its rights and responsibilities under the law.
  3. ☐ To provide a brief overview of typical sex offender behavior and the Department of Corrections supervision strategies.
  4. ☐ To inform the community about the release of a specific sex offender from prison or secure treatment facility.
  5. ☐ To educate the community about how to safeguard itself from future sex offender victimization.
  6. ☐ To solicit the reaction to placing a sex offender in the community.
  7. ☐ Other (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
- 3). How clearly was the purpose(s) of the meeting stated?
  1. ☐ Very clear; fully explained.
  2. ☐ Moderately clear.
  3. ☐ Neutral; not one way or the other.
  4. ☐ Somewhat unclear.
  5. ☐ Very unclear; never stated.
  6. ☐ Not sure.
- 4). What is your opinion about how this meeting went?
  1. ☐ High marks; positive meeting.
  2. ☐ Some value; adequate meeting.
  3. ☐ Neutral; like any other meeting.
  4. ☐ Very little value; unsatisfactory meeting.
  5. ☐ Absolutely no value; total waste of time.
- 5). Please indicate your opinion about how this meeting was run.
  1. ☐ Well organized; ran smoothly throughout.
  2. ☐ Somewhat organized; ran smoothly more often than not.
  3. ☐ Neutral; organized at times, unorganized at other times.
  4. ☐ Somewhat disorganized; often side-tracked.
  5. ☐ Highly disorganized; poorly run.
- 6). What did you expect would be the outcome of this meeting when you decided to attend? (Check all that apply)
  1. ☐ To receive as much information as possible to safeguard against the potential threat posed by the offender.
  2. ☐ To restrict as much as possible the offender's comings and goings in the neighborhood.
  3. ☐ To place the blame on whoever was responsible for placing the offender in the neighborhood.
  4. ☐ To remove or prevent the offender from residing in the neighborhood.
  5. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
  6. ☐ Not sure.

(over)

7). How would you rate the information that was presented at the meeting?

1. ☐ Very helpful.
2. ☐ Somewhat helpful.
3. ☐ Neutral; didn't strike me as helpful or unhelpful.
4. ☐ Generally unhelpful.
5. ☐ Not helpful at all.

8). Were there any handout materials provided to you at the meeting?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not sure

b. Were these materials helpful?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable

9). In general, what is your opinion about the amount of information presented at this meeting for each of the areas listed? (Please circle the number of the appropriate response).

	No Opinion	Totally Lacking	Not Nearly Enough	Adequate	Just About Right	Very Thorough
Sex Offender in Question	0	1	2	3	4	5
Other Sex Offenders in the Area	0	1	2	3	4	5
Laws on Sex Offenders	0	1	2	3	4	5
Law Enforcement Responsibilities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Corrections Responsibilities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Sex Offender's Responsibilities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Community's Lawful Options	0	1	2	3	4	5

10). Regarding my level of concern about this sex offender in the community, I now feel:

1. ☐ More anxious than before.
2. ☐ Very anxious
3. ☐ Neutral; not one way or the other.
4. ☐ Somewhat less anxious.
5. ☐ Relieved.
6. ☐ No opinion.
7. ☐ Not sure.

Comment here on reason(s) for your answer to this question:

11). What suggestions do you have for conducting future meetings?

12). Other comments or concerns:

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT**

Please return this questionnaire to the meeting evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

yy mm dd

APPENDIX B

WISCONSIN LAW ENFORCEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**WISCONSIN LAW ENFORCEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE  
SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION &  
COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION LAW**

**SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS:** Please mark an "X" in the box next to the most appropriate answer. Some questions ask for more than one response, so an "X" may be marked in more than one box. Other questions call for the assignment of a frequency value. Questions in Section IV call for more detailed responses. The identification of your agency on the last page of the survey is your own choice. This information will be used only to verify that the survey was returned by your agency.

1). Date: 

MM		DD		YY	

2). Type of Agency: 1. ☐ Police Department 2. ☐ Sheriff's Department

3). Type of jurisdiction: 1. ☐ City 2. ☐ County 3. ☐ Town 4. ☐ Village

4). Population of city/town: 1. ☐ small  
Under 10,000 2. ☐ medium  
10,000-38,999 3. ☐ large  
39,000-149,999 4. ☐ metropolitan  
150,000 or more

**Section I- Organization and Planning**

5). Has your department/agency designated a specific staff member(s) to coordinate the sex offender registration and notification functions?

1. ☐ Yes  
2. ☐ No  
3. ☐ Not Sure

6). Has your agency conducted planning meetings with other agencies, local officials or community representatives regarding the provisions of the Sex Offender Registration & Community Notification Law and its implementation?

1. ☐ Yes  
2. ☐ No  
3. ☐ Not Sure



7) Has your agency developed written policies, directives, and operational procedures regarding:

a) The registration of sex offenders in your jurisdiction?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

b). Community notification about sex offenders in your jurisdiction?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

8). If YES to questions #7a and/or #7b, on what specific topics has your agency developed written policies and procedures for implementing the law?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-Face registration  | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Media Inquiry          |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Public Inquiry             | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Community Notification |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim Inquiry             | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____           |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Watch Inquiry |  |

9). The Wisconsin Chiefs of Police and Badger State Sheriffs Associations along with the Department of Corrections have developed "Guidelines for Law Enforcement" for use in implementing the Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law. Are such guidelines familiar to your agency?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

10). Do the written policies and procedures of your agency follow what is recommended in the Guidelines for the registration of sex offenders?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Applicable
4. ☐ Not Sure

11). Do the written policies and procedures of your agency follow what is recommended in the Guidelines for community notification about sex offenders in your jurisdiction?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Applicable
4. ☐ Not Sure

12). Has your agency attended the statewide training sessions on the Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law conducted by law enforcement and correctional representatives at the above mentioned Association meetings?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

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## Section II - Implementation & Practice

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### *Sex Offender Registration*

13). Has your agency received a Special Bulletin Notification (SBN) from the Wisconsin Department of Corrections concerning the scheduled release of a sex offender to your jurisdiction?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

14). How many Special Bulletin Notifications have you received? \_\_\_\_\_

15). How many registered sex offenders are residing in your jurisdiction? \_\_\_\_\_

16). How many Face-to-Face registrations has your agency conducted? \_\_\_\_\_

17). Does your agency participate in a **Core Notification Team** to review, plan and make decisions regarding sex offender community notification in your jurisdiction?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Applicable
4. ☐ Not Sure

18). Who participates in this **Core Notification Team** process? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. ☐ Law enforcement
2. ☐ Corrections representatives
3. ☐ Other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

19). What information sources are used to determine a sex offender's probable *risk* to the community?  
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- 1. ☐ Special Bulletin Notification
- 2. ☐ Bulletin Supplement
- 3. ☐ Supervising agent case file
- 4. ☐ CIB/TIME system to access Sex Offender Registry
- 5. ☐ Case discussion during team meeting.
- 6. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

***Community Notification***

20). The "Guidelines" developed by the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police, Badger State Sheriffs Associations and the Department of Corrections have recommended using three levels of notification. Does your agency follow these developed guidelines?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Unsure

21). Has your agency developed a different method other than that mentioned in the Guidelines for disseminating information about sex offenders residing in your community?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Not Applicable
- 4. ☐ Not Sure

If YES, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

22). Approximately how many non-law enforcement agencies or organizations are registered to receive notices if and when a sex offender is released in your jurisdiction? \_\_\_\_\_

23). Which specific agencies/organizations/individuals have requested to be notified?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary and secondary schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth organizations--Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day care providers            | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed foster homes or shelter care facilities   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed group homes          | <input type="checkbox"/> State Attorney General's Office                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Watch Programs   | <input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney's Office                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Victim advocacy groups        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other law enforcement agencies                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Court                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____                      |

24). Does your agency plan to update and/or expand its list of agencies/organizations/individuals?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

25). How many formal requests for information from Neighborhood Watch Programs been received by your agency? \_\_\_\_\_

26). Which of these methods is used by your agency to manage requests from Neighborhood Watch Programs for information from the Sex Offender Registry? (Please check all that apply).

- ☐ Verification of "approved and recognized" Neighborhood Watch Programs
- ☐ Orientation by law enforcement on what is and is not allowed under the law
- ☐ Responsibilities, and penalties for misuse of information under the law
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Not Applicable

27). Does your agency issue or plan to issue Level II notifications (moderate risk of reoffense)?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not Sure

28). How many Level II notifications have been issued? \_\_\_\_\_

29). How many **Level III** (highest level) notifications have you issued for sex offenders? \_\_\_\_\_

30). How many notifications were issued for sex offenders who moved to your jurisdiction from other counties? \_\_\_\_\_

31). How many notifications were issued for sex offenders who moved to your jurisdiction from other states? \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY FOR QUESTIONS 32 AND 33**

32). What identifying information about the offender does your agency release or plan to release?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approximate address  | <input type="checkbox"/> Modus Operandi                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exact address        | <input type="checkbox"/> Place of employment                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph           | <input type="checkbox"/> Offender's vehicle & license plate# |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical description | <input type="checkbox"/> Instant offense                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal history     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) _____       |

33). For **Level III** offenders, what types of expanded notification are utilized?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Door-to-door canvassing             | <input type="checkbox"/> Print media                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Door-to-door distribution of flyers | <input type="checkbox"/> Television                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed flyers                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community meetings                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School flyers                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable               |

**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REQUIRE YOU TO ASSIGN FREQUENCY VALUES TO SOME COMMON OCCURRENCES EXPERIENCED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES. THE FREQUENCY VALUES ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

**5. Very frequent 4. Somewhat frequent 3. Frequent 2. Not too frequent 1. Very Infrequent  
0. Never** If you are not sure about the frequency of any of the choices, an answer of Not Sure can be indicated by marking an *NS*.

34). Some agencies have received various types of communications from the public after a notification has been issued. Please indicate how frequent each method of communication occurs:

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone calls  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Letters  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Faxes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Visits  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

35). Please assign a frequency value for the following topics of public communication to your law enforcement agency regarding sex offenders who were the subject of community notification:

\_\_\_\_\_ Requesting information about the sex offender(s)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Requesting information about the law  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Reporting other crimes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Offering leads about an offender who was the subject of a notification  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Expressions of fear, anger, hostility, etc.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Requesting to have the offender(s) moved from a location  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Community Meetings***

**THIS SECTION OF THE SURVEY WILL ASK YOU QUESTIONS ABOUT EACH COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION MEETING HELD IN RESPONSE TO THE RELEASE OF A SEX OFFENDER. YOU WILL NEED TO FILL OUT A FORM (FORM A) FOR EACH MEETING.**

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**Section III- Impact of The Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Act of 1997.**


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36). Some law enforcement agencies have indicated that this legislation is a burden to law enforcement. Based on your knowledge and experience with sex offender registration, including face-to-face registration, what do you feel are the benefits (if any) of this aspect of the new law? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Helps keep track of sex offenders in jurisdiction
- ☐ Expands information base on known sex offenders to assist in future investigation
- ☐ Increases information sharing on the part of criminal justice agencies
- ☐ Serves as a deterrent to future sex offending behavior
- ☐ Increases public awareness of the problem sex offenders in jurisdiction
- ☐ Increases communication/cooperation among law enforcement and corrections
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Not Applicable

37). Based on your knowledge and experience with community notification, what do you feel are the benefits of this aspect of the new law?

- ☐ Facilitates the flow of information on sex offenders to assist in future investigations
- ☐ Enhances "surveillance" of sex offenders through community information sharing
- ☐ Improves management and containment of sex offender behavior through greater visibility and vigilance
- ☐ Increases public awareness of the problem of sex offenders in society
- ☐ Promotes greater understanding by the public of the plight of their victims
- ☐ Encourages target hardening by informed community members in order to prevent future victimization
- ☐ Provides a "rallying point" for organizing neighborhoods to participate in community crime prevention
- ☐ Increases communication/cooperation among law enforcement and corrections
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Not Applicable

38). Some agencies have encountered difficulties in carrying out the requirements of the new law. Has your agency encountered any of the following problems or difficulties? (Please check all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased workload  | <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment of sex offender                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strain on departmental resources                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandstanding by politicians                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large investment of time and energy                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Concern for victims, relatives, subsequent tenants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overreaction by public                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Delay in receiving information from DOC            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media sensationalism                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased ability to deliver other services to the public |   |

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**Section IV- Suggestions for Policy and Practice**

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**Directions:** This section contains questions which call for a more detailed response. Your input and suggestions are very important.

39). Some agencies have experienced difficulties in carrying out their community notification responsibilities under the law. What particular strategies/methods have you developed to handle problems that may be related to community notification meetings?

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40). If your agency utilizes the media for community notification, have any specific problems or difficulties occurred in the handling of the information?

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41). Please describe particular strategies your agency has developed to address problems or concerns with the media.

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42.) How would you describe your agency's reaction to the changes brought about by the Wisconsin Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law?

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43.) If improvements in how community notification for sex offenders in Wisconsin could be made, what suggestions would you offer?

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44.) If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to provide them below.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED. IDENTIFICATION OF YOUR AGENCY AND JURISDICTION WILL ONLY BE USED TO VERIFY THAT THE SURVEY WAS RETURNED BY YOUR AGENCY.**

County/City/Town/ Village: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Address: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C

WISCONSIN PROBATION/PAROLE AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

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MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

**WISCONSIN PROBATION/PAROLE AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE  
SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION &  
COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION LAW**

**SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS:** Please mark an "X" in the box next to the most appropriate answer. Some questions ask for more than one response, so an "X" may be marked in more than one box. Other questions call for circling the number under your selected response. Several open-ended questions provide the opportunity for elaboration of your reaction to the new law. The identification of your unit on the last page of the survey is your own choice. The information will be used only to verify that the survey was returned.

1). Date: 

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MM DD YY

2). DCC Region #: \_\_\_\_\_

3). How would you characterize your supervising area?

1. ☐ Predominantly urban
2. ☐ Predominantly suburban
3. ☐ Predominantly rural
4. ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4). How many probation/parole agents are assigned to your field unit? \_\_\_\_\_

5). How many agents are designated as SO-ISP Agents or SO-ISP Back-up Agents? \_\_\_\_\_

6). Approximately how many adult sex offenders are currently under probation supervision in your field unit? \_\_\_\_\_

7). Approximately how many adult sex offenders are currently under parole supervision in your field unit? \_\_\_\_\_

8). Does your field unit supervise waived juvenile sex offenders on probation?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

9). Does your field unit supervise waived juvenile sex offenders on parole?

1. ☐ Yes

2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

10). Approximately how many waived juvenile sex offenders are currently under field supervision in your jurisdiction? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Section I- Organization and Planning

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11). Did your field unit participate in any DCC meetings or planning sessions regarding the provisions of the Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law and its implementation?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

\*If NO, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

12). Did your field unit participate in any meetings or planning sessions with other agency representatives (law enforcement, victim/witness coordinators, etc.) regarding the provisions of the Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law and its implementation?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, please identify these agencies: \_\_\_\_\_

13). Does your field unit presently participate in inter-agency group meetings regarding the provisions of the Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law and its implementation?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, please identify the agencies: \_\_\_\_\_

14). How often do such meetings occur? \_\_\_\_\_

15). Do you have written policies, directives, and operational procedures concerning the supervision of sex offenders in your field unit?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable

4. ☐ Not sure

16). Has your field unit supervisor received specialized training in sex offender management?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Not applicable
- 4. ☐ Not sure

17). Have agents in your field unit received specialized training in sex offender supervision?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Not applicable
- 4. ☐ Not sure

18). How many people in your field unit have undergone department training in the supervision and management of sex offenders? \_\_\_\_\_

19). If YES to Questions #16 & 17, what areas were covered in the training? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- 1. ☐ Information concerning the registration process for sex offenders
  - 2. ☐ Information concerning the community notification process for sex offenders
  - 3. ☐ Characteristics & behaviors of sex offenders
  - 4. ☐ Responsibility of probation/parole agents under this law
  - 5. ☐ Risk assessment of sex offenders
  - 6. ☐ Specific techniques in the supervision & monitoring of sex offenders
  - 7. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

20). Have agents from your unit undergone cross-training with other criminal justice agencies regarding sex offenders?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Not applicable
- 4. ☐ Not sure

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## Section II- Implementation and Practice

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**Special Bulletin Notification Cases**

21). How many Special Bulletin Notifications (SBN) have you received on your caseload?  
\_\_\_\_\_

22). How many of these SBN cases have been released to the community to date? \_\_\_\_\_

23). How many of these SBN cases are mandatory Bulletin cases (2-strike)? \_\_\_\_\_

24). How many of these SBN cases are discretionary Bulletin cases (1-strike/980 Special Purpose Evaluation)? \_\_\_\_\_

25). How many of your cases have become community notification cases without having been a Bulletin? \_\_\_\_\_

26). Which circumstances have led the SBN case to become a community notification case?  
(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. ☐ Face-to-face meeting with law enforcement
2. ☐ Media interest in the case
3. ☐ Other: Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

27). Has law enforcement established a Notification Core Team, as per the Guidelines for Wisconsin Law Enforcement, in your region?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

\*If NO, please skip to question #33

28). If YES to question #27, who leads or convenes the Notification Core Team?  
\_\_\_\_\_

29). Who are the agency representatives on the Notification Core Team? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. ☐ Police Department
2. ☐ Sheriff's Department
3. ☐ Corrections
4. ☐ Victim/Witness Program
5. ☐ District Attorney's Office
6. ☐ Corporation Counsel/City Attorney
7. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

30). Did the Notification Core Team meet to discuss the appropriate level of notification for any of the SBN cases?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

31). Is the notification level decided by the team?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

If NO, please describe how the notification level is determined: \_\_\_\_\_

32). If YES to question #31, is there generally a team consensus as to the level of notification?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

33). Did you have any specific difficulties with the SBN offenders assigned to your caseload?

(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. ☐ Timeliness of information about offenders
2. ☐ Insufficient notice of notification meeting(s)
3. ☐ Arranging placement of offender(s) in community (eg. housing arrangements, etc.)
4. ☐ High profile cases resulting in pressure from supervisor
5. ☐ Media interest in sex offender(s)
6. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
7. ☐ Not applicable

34). How often do you inform those sex offenders on your caseload who are required to register under the law about their requirement to register?

1. ☐ Never
2. ☐ Rarely
3. ☐ Sometimes, when circumstances warrant
4. ☐ Frequently
5. ☐ Not applicable
6. ☐ Not sure



35). Do you notify area law enforcement that you are the supervising agent of a particular sex offender?

1. ☐ Never
2. ☐ Rarely
3. ☐ Sometimes
4. ☐ Frequently
5. ☐ Not applicable
6. ☐ Not sure

### **Management**

36). Does your field unit utilize SO-ISP teams to manage sex offenders?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

37). Does your field unit utilize "high risk" agent teams to manage sex offenders?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

38). If YES to questions #36 or #37, which of these individuals works with your team?

1. ☐ Other specially trained agents
2. ☐ Treatment Provider
3. ☐ Polygraph Examiner
4. ☐ Law Enforcement Officer
5. ☐ Other; Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

39). What type of caseload do you supervise?

1. ☐ SO-ISP
2. ☐ "High risk" (part of team)
3. ☐ Non-specialized with some sex offenders
4. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
5. ☐ Not applicable
6. ☐ Not sure

40). What is the average number of sex offenders on your caseload? \_\_\_\_\_

41 Do you use a special risk assessment or classification instrument for sex offenders?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, identify the name of the instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

42). What other information is used to determine the supervision level for a sex offender?

(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. ☐ Special Bulletin Notification
2. ☐ Presentence Investigation Report
3. ☐ Police Reports
4. ☐ Victim Impact Statement
5. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Conditions of Supervision*

43). Are the rules of supervision for sex offenders significantly different from those of other types of offenders?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, please describe the major differences: \_\_\_\_\_

44). Are child sex offenders managed differently than other sex offenders?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, please describe the major differences: \_\_\_\_\_

45). Please circle the correct answer concerning how often each of the following has been used as a special condition of probation/parole for sex offenses involving an adult victim:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	N/A
a. Compliance with sex offender registry requirement	1	2	3	4	5
b. Provision of DNA sample	1	2	3	4	5
c. No contact with victim, directly or indirectly	1	2	3	4	5
d. No contact with children	1	2	3	4	5
e. No employment or voluntary activities where children congregate	1	2	3	4	5

f. No possession of pornography or sexually explicit material	1	2	3	4	5
g. Electronic monitoring	1	2	3	4	5
h. Periodic polygraph examination	1	2	3	4	5
i. Participation in treatment program	1	2	3	4	5
j. Approved placement in halfway house or supervised setting	1	2	3	4	5
k. Abidance of curfew	1	2	3	4	5
l. No alteration of appearance	1	2	3	4	5

46). Please circle the correct answer concerning how often each of the following has been used as a special condition of probation/parole for sex offenses involving a child victim:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	N/A
a. Compliance with sex offender registry requirement	1	2	3	4	5
b. Provision of DNA sample	1	2	3	4	5
c. No contact with victim, directly or indirectly	1	2	3	4	5
d. No contact with children	1	2	3	4	5
e. No employment or voluntary activities where children congregate	1	2	3	4	5
f. No possession of pornography or sexually explicit material	1	2	3	4	5
g. Electronic monitoring	1	2	3	4	5
h. Periodic polygraph examination	1	2	3	4	5
i. Participation in treatment program	1	2	3	4	5
j. Approved placement in halfway house or supervised setting	1	2	3	4	5
k. Abidance of curfew	1	2	3	4	5
l. No alteration of appearance	1	2	3	4	5

47). Are there other special conditions of probation/parole which are regularly used in the supervision of sex offenders in your field unit? Please describe:

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48). Does your field unit require sex offenders to undergo periodic polygraph examinations as part of supervision?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No

3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure  
 \*If NO, skip to question #54

49). Approximately how many sex offenders on your caseload have been required to take a polygraph? \_\_\_\_\_

50). How often is the polygraph used on a sex offender in your field unit?

1. ☐ 3 month intervals  
 2. ☐ 6 month intervals  
 3. ☐ Yearly  
 4. ☐ As needed, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. ☐ Not applicable  
 6. ☐ Not sure

51). Does the assigned agent have input into the questions asked in the polygraph?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

52). Who pays for the polygraph?

1. ☐ Offender  
 2. ☐ DOC  
 3. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. ☐ Not applicable  
 5. ☐ Not sure

53). Do you feel the polygraph is a useful tool in managing sex offenders under supervision?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

\*If NO, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

54). Who chooses the treatment provider for sex offenders who are required to participate in a program?

1. ☐ Offender  
 2. ☐ Probation/parole agent  
 3. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

4. ☐ Not applicable  
 5. ☐ Not sure

55). Does a contracted treatment provider for sex offenders in your field unit ever utilize the polygraph?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

56). Do you consult a list of treatment providers approved by your unit or the court for providing sex offender treatment?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

57). Please check which of the following treatment programs is used by your field unit for the treatment of sex offenders? (YOU MAY CHECK MORE THAN ONE ANSWER)

1. ☐ Denial Focus  
 2. ☐ Sex Offender Treatment  
 3. ☐ Aftercare  
 4. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

58). Does your field unit provide its own sex offender treatment?

1. ☐ Yes  
 2. ☐ No  
 3. ☐ Not applicable  
 4. ☐ Not sure

If YES, please describe briefly: \_\_\_\_\_

59). In general, who pays for the treatment of sex offenders?

1. ☐ Offender  
 2. ☐ DOC  
 3. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. ☐ Not applicable  
 5. ☐ Not sure

### ***Supervision Contacts***

60). Please provide the average number of supervision contacts with **High Risk** sex offenders per week for the following:

- a. Face-to-face contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Family contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Employer contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Treatment provider \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Home visits \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Conducting/co-facilitating treatment group \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

61). Please provide the average number of supervision contacts with **SBN** sex offenders per week for the following:

- a. Face-to-face contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Family contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Employer contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Treatment provider \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Home visits \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Conducting/co-facilitating treatment group \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

62). Please provide the average number of supervision contacts with **Medium Risk** sex offenders per month for the following:

- a. Face-to-face contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Family contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Employer contacts \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Treatment provider \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Home visits \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Conducting/co-facilitating treatment group \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Victim Policies & Procedures***

63). Is a Victim Impact Statement, if not in the PSI report, typically collected and included in the sex offender's file?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Not applicable
- 4. ☐ Not sure

64). How often do probation/parole agents in your unit have contact with the victim of the sex offense or the victim's family?

- 1. ☐ Never
- 2. ☐ Rarely
- 3. ☐ Sometimes
- 4. ☐ Frequently
- 5. ☐ Not applicable
- 6. ☐ Not sure

65). How often do probation/parole agents have contact with the victim or the victim's family for SBN cases?

- 1. ☐ Never
- 2. ☐ Rarely
- 3. ☐ Sometimes
- 4. ☐ Frequently
- 5. ☐ Not applicable
- 6. ☐ Not sure

66). How often do probation/parole agents have contact with the victim/witness coordinator for cases involving a sex offense?

- 1. ☐ Never
- 2. ☐ Rarely
- 3. ☐ Sometimes
- 4. ☐ Frequently
- 5. ☐ Not applicable
- 6. ☐ Not sure

67). How often do probation/parole agents have contact with the victim/witness coordinator for SBN cases?

- 1. ☐ Never
- 2. ☐ Rarely
- 3. ☐ Sometimes
- 4. ☐ Frequently
- 5. ☐ Not applicable
- 6. ☐ Not sure

68). What is the typical or most common type of contact with the victim of a sex offense?

- 1. ☐ Presentence interview
- 2. ☐ Violation investigation contact
- 3. ☐ Advising victim of significant changes in the status of a sex offender
- 4. ☐ Ongoing communication concerning the status of a sex offender

5. ☐ Other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

69). Did your unit participate in any specialized training to work with victims of sex offenses?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

#### **Revocation**

70). Does your field unit have specific rules or policies regarding the revocation of sex offenders on supervision for sex offenses involving adults?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, please send a copy along with your completed questionnaire.

71). Does your field unit have specific rules or policies regarding the revocation of sex offenders on supervision for sex offenses involving children?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

\*If YES, please send a copy along with your completed questionnaire.

72). Please circle the correct answer concerning how often your unit uses each of the following prerevocation sanctions to manage sex offenders suspected of failure to comply with conditions of probation/parole:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	N/A
a. Verbal warning	1	2	3	4	5
b. Increased supervision contacts	1	2	3	4	5
c. Use of electronic monitoring	1	2	3	4	5
d. Short-term confinement in halfway house	1	2	3	4	5
e. Short-term confinement in jail	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other, please specify: _____	1	2	3	4	5

73). Please circle the correct answer concerning how often your unit uses each of the following prerevocation sanctions to manage SBN sex offenders suspected of failure to comply with conditions of probation/parole:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	N/A
a. Verbal warning	1	2	3	4	5
b. Increased supervision contacts	1	2	3	4	5
c. Use of electronic monitoring	1	2	3	4	5



- d. Short-term confinement in halfway house      1      2      3      4      5
- e. Short-term confinement in jail      1      2      3      4      5
- f. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ 1      2      3      4      5

74). What sex offender behaviors would cause you to seek revocation of probation/parole for a sex offender on your caseload?

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75). What sex offender behaviors would cause you to seek revocation of probation/parole for a SBN sex offender on your caseload?

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**Community Notification**

**A. Level 3 Notifications**

76). Approximately how many community meetings have you attended in your official capacity regarding the release of a sex offender? \_\_\_\_\_ \*If NONE, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION #83.

77). Did you or others in your unit work with law enforcement in the planning and organization of a community notification meeting?

1. ☐ Never
2. ☐ Rarely
3. ☐ Sometimes
4. ☐ Frequently
5. ☐ Not applicable
6. ☐ Not sure

78). Have you or others in your unit presented information at a notification meeting?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

79). If YES to question #78, what types of information did you present at the meetings? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. ☐ Information about specific offender, including his supervision status
2. ☐ Role and responsibilities of supervising agent

3. ☐ Conditions of supervision for sex offender

4. ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

80). What has been the impact of a notification meeting on the offender's release plan **prior** to the offender's release? (please describe any changes in residence, employment, etc.) **IF YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MORE THAN ONE SUCH CASE, DESCRIBE YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT CASE EXPERIENCE.**

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81). What has been the impact of the notification meeting on the supervision plan **after** the offender's release? (please describe any changes in residence, employment, etc.) **IF YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MORE THAN ONE SUCH CASE, DESCRIBE YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT CASE EXPERIENCE.**

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82). Was law enforcement in the new jurisdiction notified by you or your unit when the sex offender was relocated to their jurisdiction?

1. ☐ Yes
2. ☐ No
3. ☐ Not applicable
4. ☐ Not sure

**B. Level 2 Notification**

83). What has been the impact of a **Level 2** notification on the release plan for a SBN sex offender

prior to the offender's release (please describe any changes in residence, employment, etc.)? IF YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MORE THAN ONE SUCH CASE, DESCRIBE YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT CASE EXPERIENCE.

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84). What has been the impact of a Level 2 notification on the supervision plan for a SBN sex offender after the offender's release? (Please describe any changes in residence, employment, etc.) IF YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MORE THAN ONE SUCH CASE, DESCRIBE YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT CASE EXPERIENCE.

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### **Section III-Impact of Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Law**

85). Based on your experiences with the new sex offender law, what do you feel are the benefits of this legislation?

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86). What specific problems or difficulties has your unit encountered in meeting the requirements of the law?

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87). What strategies/methods have you developed to handle these particular problems?

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88). What is your general reaction to the changes brought about by the Sex Offender and Community Notification law?

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89). Do you have any suggestions for improving the sex offender registration process?

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90). Do you have any suggestions for improving the sex offender notification process?

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91). *Other Comments:*

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Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Time in Position (# of years): \_\_\_\_\_

Time in Probation/Parole: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Race/ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

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